



BOROUGH OF BRIDGWATER

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ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE YEAR ENDED

31st. DECEMBER, 1972



BOROUGH OF BRIDGWATER

HEALTH COMMITTEE AT 31ST DECEMBER, 1972.

Chairman:

ALDERMAN C. W. MILNE, J. P.

Vice -Chairman:

COUNCILLOR MRS. A. MITCHELL, J. P.

ALDERMAN H. J. AYRES

COUNCILLOR MRS. D. M. SULLY

COUNCILLOR F. PHILLIPS

COUNCILLOR C. TESTER

COUNCILLOR MRS. M. E. REES, J. P.

COUNCILLOR J. TURNER, J. P.

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF 1972

Medical Officer of Health:

R. H. WATSON, M. B., Ch. B., D. P. H., M. F. C. M.

Medical Officer in Department (Somerset County Council):

A. M. ATKINSON, M. B., Ch. B., D. Obst. R. C. O. G.

Chief Public Health Inspector:

D. J. HUNT, M. A. P. H. I., Assoc. A. R. S. H.

Senior Public Health Inspector:

R. W. L. READ, D. P. A., M. A. P. H. I.

Additional Public Health Inspectors:

L. GRIFFITHS, M. A. P. H. I., M. R. S. H.

D. J. BARDWELL, M. A. P. H. I., M. R. S. H. (Resigned 29.10.72)

G. S. LOCK, M. A. P. H. I. (Commenced 6.12.72)

Meat Inspector:

J. PLUSH, M. A. M. I. (Commenced 24.1.72)



ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR 1972

The Health Clinic,  
Mount Street,  
BRIDGWATER.  
TA6 3ER

Telephone: Bridgwater 55671

October, 1973

To:

The Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors of the Borough of Bridgwater.

Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen.

I have pleasure in presenting to you the Annual Report on the health of the Borough, and the work of the Public Health Department during the year 1972. The report is set out in the manner required by the Department of Health and Social Services and is so formulated that comparison with former years can easily be made. Generally the health of the Borough has been good and notification of infectious diseases has been satisfactorily low. The Vital Statistics for 1972 have been generally satisfactory and do not call for any special comment.

It will be noted that the address of the health department has been changed and we now occupy offices in the health clinic. This move will have advantages in that it will bring the administrative staff and the nursing staff into close contact with each other and will facilitate communication. As significant changes in Local Government will come into effect next April I would like to take this opportunity of expressing my grateful appreciation to the Members of the Council for the help and consideration which I have received through the years, and for the friendly co-operation which has always been extended to me by my fellow officers.

Yours faithfully,

R. H. WATSON.

## SUMMARY OF STATISTICS

### GENERAL STATISTICS

Area (acres)	2,083
Population (census 1971)	26,598
Population (Registrar General's estimate) 1972.	26,700
Number of inhabited houses on 31st December, 1972.	8,850
Rateable Value on 31st December, 1972.	£1,260,125
Sum represented by 1d. rate on 31st December, 1972.	£12,100

### Extracts from VITAL STATISTICS for the year 1972.

#### Live Births

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	189	176	365
Illegitimate	29	25	54
	—	—	—
	218	201	419
	—	—	—

Live Birth Rate per 1,000 population	15.69
Illegitimate live births per cent of total live births	12.89
Still Births	3
Still Birth Rate per 1,000 live and still births	7.11
Total live and still births	422
Infant Deaths (deaths of infants under one year of age)	6
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births - total	14.32
Neo-natal Mortality Rate (deaths under 4 weeks per 1,000 total live births)	9.55
Early Neo-natal Mortality Rate (deaths under one week per 1,000 total live births)	7.16

Perinatal Mortality Rate (still births and deaths under one week combined per 1,000  
total live and still births) 14.22

Maternal Mortality (including abortion) NIL

Maternal Mortality Rate per 1,000 live and still births NIL

Deaths

Total number of deaths 344

Death Rate per 1,000 population 12.88

Births

After allowing for inward and outward transfers the Registrar General's figures show that there were 419 births (218 boys and 201 girls) in the Borough during 1972, being 68 births LESS than in 1971. Of these births 54 were illegitimate. This is 12.89% of the total live births, as compared with 9.65% in 1971.

The birth rate for any area is dependant on the composition of its population, and the Registrar General provides a "Comparability Factor" which is used to enable comparison to be made between the vital statistics of different areas. The product of the local birth rate and the comparability factor for the area is used for this purpose. Adjusted in this way the Standardised Birth Rate was 16.00 per 1,000 of population. The ratio of the Standardised Birth Rate to the national rate was 1.08.

Birth rates for Bridgwater and for England and Wales for the past five years were as follows:-

	1972	1968	1969	1970	1971
Crude Local Birth Rate	15.69	19.42	19.07	17.04	18.21
Standardised Birth Rate	16.00	19.03	18.69	16.70	17.85
England and Wales	14.80	16.90	16.30	16.00	16.00

Still Births

3 still births were registered during the year.

Deaths

The number of deaths which occurred in the Borough during 1972 was 458. Of these 31 were deaths of non-residents and were transferred to the district in which the persons ordinarily resided. There were, on the other hand 145 deaths of Bridgwater residents registered outside the Borough. The total corrected number of deaths assigned to the Borough was 344 (163 males and 181 females). This was 9 deaths more than in the previous year, and gave a crude death rate of 12.88.

This crude death rate cannot be used to compare the mortality with that of other districts, as the population of all areas are not similarly constituted as regards age and sex distribution. The Registrar General supplies an "Area Comparability Factor" and the crude death rate multiplied by this figure can be compared with the death rate of the country as a whole or with the mortality of any other local area. The Standardised Death Rate so obtained was 13.27 per 1,000 of the population as compared with 12.10 for England and Wales. The actual ratio was 1.10.

Death rates for Bridgwater Borough and England and Wales for the past five years were as follows:-

	1972	1968	1969	1970	1971
Crude Death Rate	12.88	11.93	11.53	13.01	12.53
Standardised Death Rate	13.27	11.57	11.41	13.40	12.91
England and Wales	12.10	11.90	11.90	11.70	11.60

CAUSE OF DEATH	M	F	TOTAL
ALL CAUSES	163	181	344
Enteritis and other diarrhoeal diseases	-	1	1
Other infective and parasitic diseases	1	-	1
Malignant neoplasm, stomach	7	3	10
Malignant neoplasm, intestine	3	4	7
Malignant neoplasm, larynx	1	-	1
Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus	14	-	14
Malignant neoplasm, breast	-	15	15
Malignant neoplasm, uterus	-	9	9
Malignant neoplasm, prostate	3	-	3
Leukaemia	1	-	1
Other malignant neoplasms	9	10	19
Benign and unspecified neoplasms	1	-	1
Diabetes Mellitus	5	2	7
Anaemias	-	1	1
Chronic rheumatic heart disease	1	-	1
Hypertensive disease	7	7	14
Ischaemic heart disease	37	27	64
Other forms of heart disease	7	25	32
Cerebrovascular disease	18	31	49
Influenza	2	2	4
Pneumonia	7	8	15
Bronchitis and emphysema	6	5	11
Peptic ulcer	1	1	2
Intestinal obstruction and hernia	1	-	1
Nephritis and nephrosis	-	1	1
Congenital anomalies	1	1	2
Birth injury, difficult labour etc.,	1	-	1
Symptoms and ill defined conditions	2	1	3
Multiple Sclerosis	2	-	2
Other diseases of nervous system	1	2	3
Other diseases of circulatory system	8	17	25
Other diseases of respiratory system	2	-	2
Other diseases of digestive system	2	1	3
Other diseases, genito-urinary system	1	2	3
Diseases of musculo-skeletal system	-	2	2
Motor Vehicle accidents	7	2	9
All other accidents	3	-	3
Suicide and self-inflicted injuries	1	-	1
All other external causes	-	1	1

As will be seen from the foregoing table, the principal causes of death were as follows:-

Heart disease	111
Cancer	79
Cerebrovascular disease	49
Pneumonia and bronchitis	26

Deaths.      Age Groups 1972

<u>Age</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Under 4 Weeks	3	1	4
4 Weeks and under 1 year	1	1	2
1 - 4 years	-	-	-
5 - 14 years	1	-	1
15 - 24 years	3	-	3
25 - 34 years	6	2	8
35 - 44 years	7	3	10
45 - 54 years	15	14	29
55 - 64 years	29	21	50
65 - 74 years	44	54	98
75 and over	54	85	139
	163	181	344

Cancer Mortality

The number of Bridgwater residents dying from cancer was 79 (males 38, females 41) as compared with 63 in 1971. They constituted 22. 97% of the total deaths during the year.

The following table shows the localisation of the disease:-

Location	Number of Deaths			
	Male	Female	Total	1971
Buccal Cavity etc.	-	-	-	3
Oesophagus	-	-	-	-
Stomach	7	3	10	7
Intestine	3	4	7	13
Larynx	1	-	1	1
Lungs, Bronchus	14	-	14	12
Breast	-	15	15	6
Uterus	-	9	9	1
Prostate	3	-	3	2
Leukaemia	1	-	1	-
Other and unspecified organs	9	10	19	18
Total	38	41	79	63

Cancer of the Uterus

The County Council have now started a scheme whereby cervical smears can be taken with a view to preventing cancer of the womb. The tests are taken by family doctors and are examined at Musgrove Park Hospital.

## Cancer of Lungs

The ages at which deaths from lung cancer occurred during the last five years is detailed in the following table:-

Year	Under 15	15/24	25/34	35/44	45/54	55/64	Over 65	Total
1968	-	-	-	-	1	5	10	16
1969	-	-	-	-	2	2	11	15
1970	-	-	-	-	3	7	6	17
1971	-	-	-	-	1	2	9	12
1972	-	-	-	2	1	3	8	14

## Infantile Mortality

6 infants under one year of age died during the year. This gave an infantile mortality rate of 14.32 while the corresponding rate for England and Wales was 17.00.

The following table shows the causes of the infant deaths in detail:-

Cause of death	Under 1 week	1 - 4 weeks	1 - 6 months	6 - 12 months	Total under 1 year
Enteritis & other diarrhoeal diseases	-	-	1	-	1
Other infective & parasitic diseases	-	1	-	-	1
Symptoms & ill defined conditions	-	-	1	-	1
Congenital anomalies	2	-	-	-	2
Birth injury, difficult labour etc.	1	-	-	-	1

There were 4 deaths of infants during the first 4 weeks of life compared with 5 the previous year.

## Deaths from Heart Disease

Of the 344 deaths, heart disease caused roughly 1 in 3 (males 52, females 59). It represented 32.27% of the total deaths from all causes and was equivalent to a death rate of 4.16 per 1,000 of the population.

## Pneumonia Mortality

There were 15 deaths from these diseases. The mortality rate per 1,000 of the population was 0.56.

## Suicide

1 death was caused by suicide.

### Inquests

4 inquests were held by the Coroner in the Borough during the year.

<u>Cause of death</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Accidental - Electrocution	1	-	1
Accidental - Road accident	-	2	2
Misadventure due to drowning	1	-	1
	2	2	4

### Population

The 1972 estimated population of the Borough was 26,700 which was an increase of 102 on the census population for the previous year. The natural increase in population, that is the excess of births over deaths, was 75.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Estimated Population</u>	<u>Natural Increase</u>
1961	25,580	129
1962	25,930	194
1963	26,130	192
1964	26,300	212
1965	26,480	195
1966	26,500	188
1967	26,580	140
1968	26,730	200
1969	26,800	202
1970	26,820	108
1971 (Census)	26,598	152
1972	26,700	75

### GENERAL HEALTH SERVICE

#### Laboratory Facilities

Pathological specimens are sent to the laboratory at Musgrove Park Hospital, which forms part of the Public Health Laboratory Service. Results of investigations are available with the minimum of delay and there is good liaison between the laboratory personnel and the field workers in the Public Health Department.

Examinations carried out during the year include:-

Water samples	38
Ice Cream samples	49

## Hospitals

Hospitals in the area are administered by the South Western Regional Hospital Board, through the West Somerset Hospital Management Committee.

The hospitals are:-

Bridgwater General Hospital	44 beds
Mary Stanley Nursing Home	19 beds
Northgate Hospital	54 beds

Cases of infectious diseases needing hospital treatment, or isolation, are admitted to Taunton Isolation Hospital.

The adaptation of Bridgwater Hospital to cater for short stay surgical cases was completed. Patients requiring relatively minor operative procedures are treated and then discharged to the care of their family doctors and practice nurses after 48 hours. This scheme has functioned remarkably smoothly, and has significantly reduced the waiting list in the Mid-Somerset Clinical Area.

## Ante-Natal Clinics

Doctors' ante-natal clinics are held three times a week at the Mary Stanley Nursing Home and are staffed by general practitioners who are interested in maternity work. The clinics help to cement the relationship between patient, midwife and doctor and are particularly valuable.

## Relaxation Classes

These classes which are still very popular, are now held at the Mary Stanley Nursing Home on Tuesdays from 7.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m. with an average attendance of 18 expectant mothers per session, and at the Health Centre on Wednesday from 2.00 p.m. to 4.00 p.m. Following short talks on "Parentcraft" by a doctor, health visitor or midwife, relaxation instruction is given by a physiotherapist.

## Child Health

Child Health Clinics are held as follows:-

The Health Centre, Mount Street.	Thursday, 10.30 a.m. to 12.00 noon Friday, 2.00 to 4.00 p.m.
The Community Centre, Parkway.	Thursday, 2.00 to 4.00 p.m.

As mentioned in previous reports, Health Visitors and District Nurses are now attached to family doctor practices and to ensure that as far as possible mothers visiting Child Health Clinics meet their own nurse arrangements have been made for Health Visitors attached to practices to hold clinics at different centres on specific days and patients of the various doctors are encouraged to attend the clinics on those days. This arrangement is working satisfactorily.

### School Clinics

A school medical officer attends a school clinic each Monday morning from 10.00 a.m. at the Health Centre, Mount Street, and is available to advise parents on any health matters concerning their children. Many parents avail themselves of this additional opportunity to discuss their children's health with the school doctor.

School nurses hold minor ailments clinics at the Health Centre, from 9.00 a.m. on Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

Other clinics held at the Health Centre, Mount Street include:-

Orthopaedic Clinic	Monday a.m. and third Wednesday a.m.
Child Guidance Clinic	Friday a.m.
Speech Therapy Clinic	All day Monday
	Wednesday p.m., and Friday all day.
Marriage Guidance Clinic	Wednesday a.m.
Simon Trust Clinic	Monday and Thursday p.m.

### National Assistance Act, 1948 - Section 47.

A number of cases were assisted through informal action, and in no case was it necessary for the Council to take statutory action to secure the admission of an old person to suitable accommodation.

### Welfare of Old People

The various organisations to which reference was made in previous reports have continued to play an important part in contributing to the welfare of old people. The inclusion of chiropody treatment as part of the National Health Service has helped to fill a great need and has been much appreciated by the old people.

The Council assist the W.V.S. in providing meals on wheels for old people and this worthwhile service is greatly appreciated by the recipients. An average of 210 meals per week are distributed.

PREVALENCE AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS AND CONTAGIOUS DISEASES

The following table sets out the cases of notifiable diseases that occurred in the Borough during 1972. The table is drawn up after making the necessary corrections in diagnosis by either the practitioners or the Medical Officers at the Isolation Hospitals.

Disease	Under 1 year	1	2	3	4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-64	65-80	Age Unknown	Total	Admitted to Hospital	
Measles	6	2	3	4	12	34	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	62	-
Tuberculosis:																	
Respiratory	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	-	-	3	3
Non-respiratory	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gastro-Enteritis	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>3</b>

During the previous year 11 cases of notifiable infectious diseases were notified

### Acute Poliomyelitis (Infantile Paralysis)

No cases were notified during the year.

### Measles

62 cases of measles were notified during the year.

### Tuberculosis

3 new cases of respiratory tuberculosis and no non-respiratory case of tuberculosis were notified in 1972 as compared with 3 respiratory cases in 1971.

	<u>Respiratory</u>	<u>Non-respiratory</u>
Number of cases on the Tuberculosis Register at 31. 12. 72.	76	11
Number of new cases during year	3	-
Number of deaths during the year	-	-

The following table shows sex and age group of cases notified during the year:-

Age	Under 5	5-14	15-24	25-44	45-64	65 & over	Age Unknown	Total
Male	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Female	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	2

### B. C. G. Vaccine

In order to raise the immunity of school leavers to tuberculosis, vaccination with B.C.G. vaccine was offered to children between the ages of 13 and 14 years attending schools in the Mid-Somerset Area. 888 received the preliminary skin test, to determine whether they had in fact already experienced some infection with tuberculosis. Of these 808 were vaccinated with B.C.G. vaccine.

### Food Poisoning

One case of food poisoning was notified.

### Diphtheria

No cases of diphtheria were notified.

## SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

Refuse disposal is by Controlled Tipping and use as tipping sites is made of the many claypits surrounding the town. The tip at present in use is situated close to a residential area, and the strictest control over tipping technique is essential if nuisance is to be avoided. The Council are proceeding with their plans to pulverise refuse before disposal.

### Water Supplies

Regular bacteriological examination has been made of the water going into supply.

Results were as follows:-

### Ashford Supply

30 samples were tested after treatment and all but four gave excellent results. No special action was considered necessary.

### Durleigh Supply

8 samples were tested after treatment and all gave excellent results.

### Chemical Analysis - of Water in Distribution

Reports were as follows:-

#### Ashford Reservoir

	Parts per million
Physical Characters	Slightly Turbid
Reaction	Very slightly alkaline
pH	7.5
Free Carbon Dioxide	4.0
Free Chlorine	0.1
Total Chlorine	0.2
Total Solids	255.0
Total Alkalinity (As CaCO <sub>3</sub> )	140.0
Carbonate Hardness "	140.0
Non-Carbonate "	45.0
Total Hardness "	185.0
Chloride (as Cl)	19.0
Ammoniacal Nitrogen (as N)	0.002
Albuminoid " "	0.036
Nitrate "	4.04
Nitrite "	NIL
Oxygen absorbed from Permanganate in four hours at 27° C.	0.50
Sediment	SLIGHT
Iron	0.06
Copper	0.08
Lead	0.009
Zinc	NIL

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	<u>Parts per million</u>
Physical Characters	Clear and bright.
Reaction	Hazen units less than 5.
pH	Very slightly alkaline
Free Carbon Dioxide	7.2
Free Chlorine	0.5
Total Chlorine	0.1
Total Solids	0.4
Total Alkalinity (As CaCO <sub>3</sub> )	325.0
Carbonate Hardness "	135.0
Non-Carbonate "	135.0
Total Hardness "	50.0
Chloride (as Cl)	185.0
Ammoniacal Nitrogen (as N)	17.0
Albuminoid " "	0.020
Nitrate " "	0.136
Nitrite " "	6.2
Oxygen absorbed from Permanganate in four hours at 27° C.	0.002
Sediment	1.2
Iron, Lead and Zinc	NIL
Copper	NIL
	0.09

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Both supplies showed moderately hard waters containing some organic pollution

#### Swimming Baths

Treatment of the water in the swimming baths is regularly supervised. Modern plant enables the water to be turned over every six hours and at the same time to be filtered and purified. Bacteriological examination of the water was carried out on 15 occasions all of which gave excellent results.

#### Sewage Disposal

The Council's scheme to resewer parts of the Borough in order to take all sewage to a new treatment works at Chilton Trinity is progressing satisfactorily. The new works will also serve the parishes in Bridgwater Rural District which will be connected to the proposed Southern Trunk Sewer.

All sewage will then receive treatment before discharge to the River Parrett.

Housing

Number of permanent dwellings in Borough	9,047
Number of permanent dwellings owned by Local Authority	3,720
Number of houses demolished or closed during the year as a result of formal or informal action	5

	Houses erected during year		Houses in course of erection	
	For Slum Clearance	For Other purposes	For Slum Clearance	For Other purposes
Local Authority	-	56	-	21
Private Enterprise	-	48	-	61

Advantage has also been taken of Improvement Grants made under the Housing Acts, 1949-54. 96 applications were received and 75 were approved.

FACTORIES ACT, 1961.

The following particulars indicate the action taken under Part I of the Factories Act, 1961.

Premises	Number on Register	Number of		Occupiers Prosecuted
		Inspections	Written Notices	
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 & 6 are to be enforced by the Local Authority	4	4	-	-
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	143	119	-	-
(iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers' premises)	6	5	-	-
Total	153	128	-	-

	No. of cases in which defects were found				No. of cases in which prosecutions were instructed	
	Found	Remedied	Referred			
			To H.M. Insp.	By H.M. Insp.		
Want of cleanliness (S.1)	-	-	-	-	-	
Overcrowding (S. 2)	-	-	-	-	-	
Unreasonable temperature (S. 3)	-	-	-	-	-	
Inadequate ventilation (S. 4)	-	-	-	-	-	
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6)	-	-	-	-	-	
Sanitary conveniences (S. 7)	-	-	-	-	-	
(a) Insufficient	1	2	-	-	-	
(b) Unsuitable or defective	5	4	-	-	-	
(c) Not separate for sexes	-	-	-	-	-	
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to outwork)	3	2	-	-	-	
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	

		Section 133	Section 134			
		No. of out - workers in August list required by Sec. 133(1) (c)	No. of cases of default in sending list <small>to the Board Council</small>	No. of prosecutions for failure to supply lists	No. of instances of work in un - wholesome prem.	
Brush Making	1	-	-	-	-	-
Making of wearing apparel	68	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

### STAFF EXAMINATIONS

Medical examinations carried out by the Department in connection with new appointments to the Council's staff, and in connection with the Superannuation Scheme and the Workmen's Sickness Benefit Regulations, were as follows:-

<u>Department</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Town Clerk	-	7	7
Borough Engineer	35	4	39
Borough Treasurer	-	-	-
Housing	9	3	12
Health	2	-	2
Library	2	5	7
	<hr/> 48	<hr/> 19	<hr/> 67

To:

The Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors of the Borough of Bridgwater.

Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit my Annual Report for the year ending 31st December, 1972.

HOUSING

In July, 1971 a White Paper entitled "Fair Deal for Housing" was presented to Parliament. This document reported that there are still 2 million houses which can be classified as slums, there are a further 2 million which are without bathrooms or indoor sanitation.

Dealing with the improvement of rent controlled houses it is pointed out that since August, 1969, despite the new provisions provided by the Housing Act, 1969 less than 4,000 controlled dwellings have been improved up to the qualifying standard of repair and amenity. This relates to the procedure whereby an owner can make application to the Rent Officer for an increase in rent phased over a period of four years, provided all amenities have been or will be provided and the house is in a good state of repair.

In Bridgwater a further 16 applications for "qualification certificates" were received during the year bringing the total so far to 73. These certificates are granted if the house is in a good state of repair and modern amenities are provided, the landlord can then apply to the Rent Officer who will fix a new rent for the property. It is quite obvious that the early rush of applications has come to an end. In the main these came from the larger Companies who own vast numbers of houses, and were well aware of the provisions of the Housing Act, 1969, and were willing to have their houses brought up to a good standard.

The last of the "controlled" houses will come out of control in July, 1975 when the "rate band" of less than £20 is reached. The landlord will then be able to apply to the Rent Officer to have the rent fixed at present values having regard to its condition with or without amenities.

I can foresee that when the tenant is faced with an increase in rent, the local authorities' public health departments will be asked to deal with many repair problems, which the tenant perhaps, in the past, has put up with because of very low rents.

It seems to me, therefore, that the only positive way of improving large numbers of houses is for the Council to use the General Improvement Area procedure, and at the same time grants are available to improve the environment surrounding these houses.

To bring the report on Union Street up to date, I am pleased to record that the Council have got out such a scheme for this area. Whether or not it receives the approval of the County Planning Authority remains to be seen. One thing is certain, however, the people living in Union Street are behind it and have expressed their satisfaction with the proposals.

Five Closing Orders were made and where necessary the Council rehoused the tenants. One Closing Order was removed since the property was improved to provide two houses of excellent standard.

During the year numerous complaints concerning housing conditions were dealt with and a total of 31 repair schedules were sent out.

The inspection of accommodation occupied by applicants on the Housing Waiting List still entails a considerable amount of work and this has now been extended to include applicants residing near to, but outside of the Borough Boundary. Altogether 147 houses were inspected for this purpose.

No new cases of overcrowding were reported and none were abated during the year so that the total on the register remains at 11. No formal action was required.

#### OFFICES, SHOPS & RAILWAY PREMISES ACT, 1963

##### Operation of the General Provisions of the Act

This part of the work, dealing with the Health, Welfare and Safety of some 3,693 persons employed mainly in Offices and Shops continued to receive special attention this year. A total of 581 inspections were made.

438 premises are registered, a decrease of 1 from last year. The number of recorded infringements against the regulations was 178 items, most of which were dealt with informally at the time of the inspection.

Special attention was paid to lifts, hoists, dangerous practices, floors, passages and stairs. A list of the contraventions found appear in the table at the end of this report. The number of written notices totalled 11.

##### Registration

The whole of the premises coming within the scope of the Act have been registered. The Act places a duty on the occupier of the premises to notify the Local Authority in writing if he intends to use premises which will be subject to Registration.

##### Exemptions

No exemptions are in force.

##### Accidents

The number of accidents reported during 1972 was seven, which is two less than last year. The injuries were fortunately of a minor nature, being mainly foot or leg injuries, bruised ribs, a strained back and cut or bruised hands.

##### Prosecutions

There has been no necessity to institute legal proceedings.

Registrations and General Inspections

Class	Number of premises registered during the year	Total number of registered premises at end of year	Number of registered premises receiving a general inspection during the year
Offices	11	132	38
Retail Shops	7	254	108
Wholesale Shops, Warehouses	3	23	10
Catering Establishments open to the public, Canteens	2	29	6
Fuel Storage Depots	--	-	-
Totals	23	438	162

Analysis of Persons Employed in Registered Premises by Workplace

Class of Workplace	Number of Persons Employed
Offices	1,398
Retail Shops	1,510
Wholesale Departments, Warehouses	599
Catering Establishments open to the Public	181
Canteens	5
Fuel Storage Depots	-
Total	3,693
Total Males	1,811
Total Females	1,882

Section	Number of Contraventions found		Section	Number of Contraventions found	
4	Cleanliness	22	14	Seats (Sedentary Workers)	1
6	Temperature	20	16	Floors, Passages & Stairs	14
7	Ventilation	5	20	Health and Safety (Lifts and Hoists)	1
8	Lighting	6	22	Dangerous Practices and Conditions	1
9	Sanitary Conveniences	15	24	First Aid General Provisions	21
10	Washing Facilities	9	48	Notification of Accidents	1
12	Clothing Accommodation	5	49	Registration of Premises	21
13	Seating Facilities	3	50	Information for Employees	33
				Total	178

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Enquiries are made in cases of notifiable disease and disinfection is carried out free of cost. In other cases a charge is made. The disinfecting plant at Market Street is functioning satisfactorily, and is tested every 3 months to ensure that it is in proper working order.

FOOD CONTROL

(i) There are 239 premises within the Borough concerned with the handling of food as a principal part of their business. Many of the food shops are of supermarket size and the total business involved is based on a trading population of 54,000 persons. In the table which follows the number of food premises are classified in accordance with their main trading activity. A total of 1,798 visits were made by the public health inspectors in order to deal with a wide range of food control matters, and 63 written notices were sent out.

The standard for our inspections are set by The Food Hygiene (General) Regulations, 1970 and The Food Hygiene (Markets, Stalls and Delivery Vehicles) Regulations, 1966. At the end of this report is a table setting out improvements which have been completed during the year.

During the year legal proceedings were taken against five firms in relation to 32 food offences. Fines and costs amounting to £591 were made.

The contraventions related to a dirty milk bottle, sale of faggots which were unfit for human consumption a restaurant which had for sale, food in an unfit condition on dirty premises, and finally two ice-cream vehicles which either did not possess hot water, wash hand basins and first aid kit, or where provided, were not capable of being used.

The Food Standards Committee Report on the Date Marking of Food was published during the month of July. New legislation will be required, but to allow for a period of full discussion and changes in practices and packaging machinery, it will be three years before it comes into force.

Briefly, prepacked foods are divided into two main groups, "short life" and "long life" foods. The first of these are foods which have to be sold within three months of production, they will be required to bear a label with for example "sell by 08 Sep 72". Long life foods will have the month and year of production clearly shown on the label and this will certainly improve the question of stock rotation which has given problems in the past.

It is interesting to note that it is not the intention to make it an offence to sell short life food after the sell by date.

A number of food companies are already using open date coding and it appears to be working quite well. It certainly creates a confidence in the freshness of the article so far as the customer is concerned.

	No. of Premises	Premises fitted to comply with Regs. 16 and 19 (Hand Washing and Food and Equipment Washing Facilities)
Grocers	52	52
Butchers	19	19
Bakers & Confectioners (including distribution centres)	13	13
Restaurants, unlicensed Hotels and Kiosks	22	22
Greengrocers	10	10
Confectioners (sweetmeats)	23	23
Wet Fish	2	2
Fried Fish Shops	10	10
Licensed Premises (including off licences)	58	58
Cooked Meats etc.	2	2
Factory Canteens	12	12
School Canteens	16	16

#### (ii) Bacteriological Sampling of Food

It was decided to discontinue the practice of taking routine samples of food for this purpose. The results over a number of years were always satisfactory and it was felt by us, and the Public Health Laboratory Service that little useful purpose was being gained by continuing this exercise.

(iii) Food Complaints

Forty complaints were received during the year. Many of these were the result of contamination by foreign bodies such as insects, glass fragments, wire, and others were unfit due to mould or abnormal colouration, taste or smell.

Every complaint is investigated fully and this does give an opportunity for advice to be given on the storage and handling of food-stuffs. This advice is readily accepted, and in many cases retailers have adopted their own coding system to both indentify food sold from their premises and to ensure that packeted food is sold as fresh as possible.

(iv) St. Matthews Fair

This event is one of the highlights of Bridgwater's Year and brings special responsibilities to our department. There were 57 food stalls, most of them placed along West Street and nearly all of them are regular visitors to the Fair. It would be interesting to know the total produced quantity of food sold during the 4 open days, all of which has to be produced in the limited space available to each stall. Years ago food produced under these conditions was always suspect, but we are now able in insist on a very high standard of hygiene together with fresh products, this, together with the fact that the food is for immediate consumption, ensures that there are no tummy upsets from bacteriological contamination.

(v) The number of food premises registered under Section 16 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1955 is 109.

Ice-Cream Premises	81
Potted, Pressed, Pickled and Preserved Foods	28
The number of firms retailing milk is	40
The number of registered dairy premises is	8

All milk sold in the Borough is either Pasteurised, Sterilised, Tuberculin Tested or U. H. T. Longlife.

(vi) The number of inspections of registered food premises is given in the summary at the end of the report.

(vii) In connection with the visits to food premises the following foods were condemned.

	<u>Tons</u>	<u>Cwts.</u>	<u>lbs.</u>
Meat at Slaughterhouse	33	4	12
Meat at Retail Shops			32
Cooked Meats and Meat Products		1	33
Bacon		4	106
Canned Meat		2	105
Canned Vegetables		6	50
Canned Fruit	1	3	76
Frozen Foods		10	7
Other Foods		12	-
	36	5	85

The meat, after staining, was sent to a sterilisation plant and other foods disposed of at the Corporation Refuse Tip.

(viii) Ice-Cream (Heat Treatment) Regulations, 1959 - 1963

The number of premises registered for the manufacture or sale of ice-cream is as follows:-

Registered for manufacture and sale	3
Registered for sale	81

In all three instances of manufacture, brands of cold mix are used.

60 samples of ice-cream were submitted for bacteriological examination during the year and these were graded as follows:-

Grade 1	59
Grade 2	1
Grade 3	-
Grade 4	-

These results are satisfactory.

MEAT INSPECTION

All slaughtering in the Borough is carried out at a privately owned slaughterhouse at the Cattle Market. It is well provided with refrigerated space and a good cooling hall. A larger water main was installed during 1968 so that there is a plentiful supply for all purposes. Individual paper towels are provided for wiping down each carcase and there is a sterilising tank for knives, saws etc.

The owners of the slaughterhouse decided towards the end of 1969 to operate a 5 day week and to close the slaughterhouse on Saturdays and Sundays. This was welcome news for the Public Health staff who for many years had worked week-ends in order to maintain 100% meat inspection.

All meat passed as fit for human consumption is stamped in accordance with the requirements of the Meat Inspection Regulations, 1963.

The general quality of meat inspected was very good and the great majority of carcases rejected were from animals slaughtered for emergency reasons.

Carcases Inspected

	Cattle	Cows	Calves	Sheep & Lambs	Pigs	Total
Number Killed	1,188	68	435	8,281	39,460 *	49,432
Number Examined	1,188	68	435	8,281	39,460 *	49,432

\* includes 99 sows and 11 boars.

No horses were slaughtered within the Borough.

Carcases and Offal Inspected and Condemned in Whole or in Part

	Cattle exc. Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep & Lambs	Pigs	Total
<u>All diseases except T. B. &amp; Cysticerci</u>						
Whole carcases condemned	3	9	42	16	281	351
Parts or organs condemned	233	21	17	379	8,346	8,996
% of the no. inspected affected with diseases other than T. B. or Cysticerci	19.9	44.1	11.3	4.8	21.9	18.9
<u>T.B. only</u>						
Whole carcases condemned	-	-	-	-	-	-
Parts or organs condemned	-	-	-	-	119	119
% of the no. inspected affected with T. B.	-	-	-	-	0.3	0.2
<u>Cysticercosis</u>						
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	3	-	-	-	-	3
Carcases submitted to treatment by refrigeration	3	-	-	-	-	3
Generalised and totally condemned	-	-	-	-	-	-
<u>Weight of meat condemned</u> (in lbs.) for						
(a) T. B.	-	-	-	-	1,232	1,232
(b) Cysticercosis	98	-	-	-	-	98
(c) Other	4,128	5,930	2,746	1,669	58,577	73,050
Total (lbs.)	4,226	5,930	2,746	1,669	59,809	74,380

Disease or condition	Cattle exc. Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep	Pigs
Abnormal odour	-	-	43(1)	-	-
Abscesses	693	14	156(1)	82(1)	10,627(77)
Actinobacillosis	66	-	-	-	-
Anæmia	-	-	48(1)	26(1)	-
Arthritic conditions	-	-	-	16	1,356(1)
Ascariasis	-	-	-	-	5,141
Atrophic Rhinitis	-	-	-	-	91
Bruising	160	311	198(2)	24	728(3)
Cirrhosis	69	-	-	-	1,346
Congestion	39	15	3	13	1,075
Contamination (tankwater)	-	-	-	-	2,056
C. Bovis	98	-	-	-	-
C. Ovis	-	-	-	24	-
Emaciation, pathological	-	422(1)	-	65(2)	482(8)
Enteritis, Haemorrhagic	-	-	-	-	80(1)
Fascioliasis	1,257	67	-	140	-
Fatty Change	25	15	-	14	-
Fever (pyrexia)	-	-	46(1)	-	332(1)
Hydatid cysts	24	23	-	-	-
Imperfect bleeding	-	742(1)	-	-	-
Inflammatory conditions	50	5	6	12	14
Jaundice	-	-	132(3)	-	165(2)
Lymphatic Leukemia	-	-	58(1)	-	-
Mastitis, acute septic	-	850(1)	-	-	-
Moribund	-	-	371(8)	242(4)	925(10)
Muellerius capillaris	-	-	-	144	-
Oedema	440(1)	1,018(2)	188(5)	290(6)	381(5)
Other diseases or conditions	22	25	20	6	53
Parasitical conditions	43	-	-	334	-
Pericarditis	-	4	1	4	658
Peritonitis, acute septic	-	-	-	-	798(8)
Pleurisy	128	-	5	2	1,224
Pleurisy, acute septic	425(1)	-	-	-	429(4)
Pneumonia	66	-	34	133	13,802
Pneumonia, acute septic	-	-	40(1)	48(1)	1,012(12)
Pyæmia, incl. joint ill	-	1,075(2)	655(9)	-	10,633(102)
Septic Omphalophlebitis	-	-	66(1)	-	-
Septicaæmia	550(1)	740(1)	676(8)	-	5,043(47)
Sepsis	-	-	-	2	70
Telangiectasis	36	44	-	-	-
Tuberculosis	-	-	-	-	1,232
Tumours	-	496(1)	-	-	-
Uræmia	-	-	-	48(1)	-
Urticaria	-	-	-	-	56
Xanthosis	35	64	-	-	-
Total weights (in lbs.)	4,226(3)	5,930(9)	2,746(42)	1,669(16)	59,809(281)

The figures in brackets indicate the number of cases where the whole of the carcasses and the organs were rejected.

Total weight of meat and offals rejected: - 33 tons, 4 cwts. and 12lbs.

### Tail-biting in Pigs

There has been a noticeable increase in the number of pigs affected by tail-biting coming into the Slaughterhouse. The Ministry recommend that in each case the carcase is split so that a more careful examination can be carried out to determine the spread of pyogenic organisms from the site of the injury. There has been a reluctance in the trade for pigs to be split particularly when the appearance of the bitten tail is not too angry looking.

Because of this a record has been kept for the full twelve month period and out of a throughput of 39,460 pigs 763 carcases were split because of tail-biting, and of these 135 (17.7%) were rejected as being unfit for human consumption.

It was also ascertained that the condition of the tail bore no relationship to the extent of infection subsequently discovered. The investigation has proved to the satisfaction of all concerned the importance of splitting carcases in every case of tail-biting.

### Hygiene Control

As part of the routine hygiene control conducted at the slaughter-house, two samples of water were taken from the pig scalding tank, the first after 65 pigs had gone through, the second after 110 pigs. Both samples were submitted for bacteriological examination and no salmonella organisms were found.

### CLEAN AIR

On the industrial side there is an increasing trend for large steam users to convert their boilers to using North Sea Gas with a stand-by provision for oil firing. In parts of the district where smut emission has caused problems from time to time despite the use of special additives, this has been a most welcome change for the residents who have suffered oil smuts on their paint-work and washing. The emission of sulphur dioxide gases will also have been reduced, and since this is a national trend will make a worthwhile contribution to clean air in our industrial cities.

On the 1st October, 1969 sections 1 to 4 of the Clean Air Act, 1968 came into operation. Section 1 has particular importance as it makes it an offence to permit dark smoke to be emitted from any industrial or trade premises. This does not include dark smoke from a chimney of a building which is already dealt with by the Clean Air Act, 1956.

This section applies to the burning of all manner of rubbish on open ground within trade premises. Certain exemptions are allowed such as burning of waste material from the demolition of a building; surfacing and resurfacing of highways; burning of diseased carcases etc.. However, the indiscriminate burning of trade waste including old motor vehicles is no longer allowed.

One of our larger industrial concerns made immediate arrangements to tip any waste material which could not be disposed of in their waste heat boiler and no longer burn any on open ground. This system has continued to operate successfully during 1971 and only on two occasions was it found necessary to take informal action with regard to indiscriminate burning of trade waste on open ground.

General observations are made of all factory chimneys and advice given when required.

Installation of all new furnaces is notified to the department under the provisions of the Act.

#### NOISE ABATEMENT

Complaints about noise vary considerably and in some cases have not been substantiated. The new noise level meter has enabled us to measure noise with a much greater degree of accuracy and provide more reliable figures when taking it up with the Companies concerned.

Whilst there is no legal definition of what constitutes a noise nuisance it may be said to apply when a noise is so loud or so irritating in character and which is either so prolonged or repeated as to interfere materially with the ordinary accepted standards of human comfort.

As in the past more of the complaints relate to industrial noise particularly during the hours of darkness. Without exception, all the industrial concerns are most co-operative and carry out any measures which after discussion seem appropriate. Unfortunately residents in areas which are on the fringe of the industrial parts of the town do have to accept some industrial noise during the hours of darkness but in no case was this found to be generally unacceptable by those residents.

#### SWIMMING BATHS

Samples of water in the baths at the Broadway Lido were sent for bacteriological examination regularly throughout the season. 15 samples were examined, all were satisfactory.

#### CARAVANS

There are three licensed sites within the Borough. One is licensed for a single caravan being connected to mains water, electricity and sewer system. Both large sites satisfy the conditions of the licence.

The Caravan Site situated off Colley Lane contained 70 caravans by the end of the year. All are of the large residential type with connections to mains water and sewer. During the year numerous complaints were made by the residents about conditions such as industrial noise, including passing trains, no public telephone and lack of nearby shops, etc.

Improvements were made to the roadway at the Colley Lane Site and also some flood lighting of the site has been provided by the owners.

The whole surrounding area including the site is zoned for industrial purposes and many of the complaints received from the caravan dwellers are industrial in character. These points will have to be taken into account when a renewal of planning permission is sought.

## RATS AND MICE DESTRUCTION

No. of sewer treatments - 2.

No. of refuse tip treatments - 16.

No. of complaints received of rat and mouse infestation

		<u>Type of Property</u>	
		<u>Non-Agricultural</u>	<u>Agricultural</u>
1.	1. Number of properties in district	11, 262	6
2.	(a) Total number of properties (including nearby premises) inspected following notification	439	1
	(b) Number infested by		
	(i) Rats	207	1
	(ii) Mice	222	-
3.	(a) Total number of properties inspected for rats/mice for reasons other than notification	2, 021	5
	(b) Number infested by		
	(i) Rats	50	-
	(ii) Mice	14	-

During the year 16 full scale treatments were carried out on the refuse tips at the Cattle Market and Saltlands and the former tips at Bath Road and Bristol Road.

Two sewer treatments were completed, the first consisting of the prolonged baiting of some 229 manholes, showed a take of 37, and the second consisted of 97 manholes with the take of 27.

These results are most satisfactory and reflect the excellent work carried out throughout the year by our Rodent Operator, Mr. C. Chapman.

## STAFF

Mr. D. J. Bardwell, Public Health Inspector, resigned in order to take up an appointment with another local authority.

We were pleased to welcome Mr. G. S. Lock who took up his duties as Public Health Inspector on the 6th December, 1972.

## SUMMARY

### INSPECTIONS MADE DURING THE YEAR

#### Environmental Health

Water Supply	57
Drainage	299
Stable and Piggeries	29
Factories	123
Outworkers	59
Rodent Control	69
Insect Pest Control	25
Caravan Sites	11
Swimming Baths	24
Atmospheric Pollution	27
Pet Shops and Kennels	19
Noise Nuisances	10
Offices, Shop & Railway Premises - General Inspections	162
Offices, Shops & Railway Premises - Other Visits	419
Miscellaneous	597
Health Education Visits	41

#### Housing

Houses inspected under Public Health Acts	48
Visits paid to the above Houses	103
Houses inspected under the Housing Acts	56
Visits paid to the above Houses	101
Inspections under the Housing Points Scheme	147
Houses inspected in connection with Overcrowding	15
Visits paid to the above Houses	15
Verminous premises inspected	6
Visits paid to the above Premises	8
Qualification Certificates - Inspections	20
Qualification Certificates - Other Visits	38
Miscellaneous	99

#### Infectious Diseases

Enquiries in cases of Infectious Diseases	8
Suspected Food Poisoning enquiries	2
Miscellaneous	2

#### Meat and Food Inspection

Visits to Slaughterhouses	743
Visits to Butchers	27
Visits to Confectioners	65
Visits to Fishmongers and Poulterers	16
Visits to Grocers	380

Visits to Greengrocers and Fruiterers	28
Visits to Bakers and Confectioners	44
Visits to Fried Fish Shops	39
Visits to Dairies and Milk Distributors	9
Visits to Ice-Cream Premises	78
Visits for Ice-Cream Samples	60
Visits to Restaurants and Catering Establishments	147
Visits to Food Preparing Premises	34
Visits to Licensed Premises	91
Visits to Market Stalls	134
Visits to Mobile Shops and Delivery Vans	169
Miscellaneous	134

### Explosives

Visits in connection with Explosives	17
Visits in connection with Petroleum Spirit	40

### WORK DONE

#### Food Hygiene (General) Regulations, 1970

##### Washing - Food and Equipment

Sinks provided or renewed	10
Water heaters provided or renewed	4
Drainage boards provided or renewed	3
Equipment cleansed or renewed	31
Dish washing machine installed	1

##### Washing - Hands

Washbasins provided or renewed	28
Hot water provided	2
Nailbrushes provided	27
Notices provided	28
Soap and towel provided	15

##### W. C. Compartments

Cleansed or renewed	5
Redecorated	5

##### Food Rooms

Walls repaired	7
Walls cleansed	19
Ceilings cleansed	8
Ceilings repaired	2
Floors repaired	7
Floors cleansed	16
Rooms redecorated	28
Shelving resurfaced	13





